

BLM's 1999 Volunteer Program

*I*n Fiscal Year 1999, some 17,300 individuals contributed their time and energies to improve our public lands. These dedicated volunteers donated more than 962,293 hours of work, the equivalent of 534.6 work years! The monetary worth of our volunteers' contributions is estimated to be over \$14 million. Our volunteers cleaned up recreation areas, restored wetlands, improved wildlife habitat, repaired fences, pulled weeds, built trails, and

completed hundreds of jobs to improve our public lands.

But volunteer contributions cannot be measured solely in terms of dollars saved. Volunteers help BLM educate others about the public lands and the complex management challenges the agency faces every day. And, they serve as role models for all of us, instilling pride in the public lands and in public land stewardship.



At Montana's Altman Confluence site near Billings, volunteers poured a 140-foot x 5-foot wheelchair-accessible sidewalk leading to a vault toilet; an extra 2-foot x 3-foot commemorative slab was also poured to allow National Public Lands Day volunteers to leave their signatures or initials. They indeed left their mark upon the land!

Volunteer Activity for Fiscal Years 1995-99

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Total Participants	19,626	16,880	20,145	23,625	17,300
Total Hours	1,219,489	1,097,115	1,149,294	1,355,130	962,293
Value to BLM (\$)	13,602,369	12,369,325	14,428,428	19,378,359	14,270,805*
Work-Years	677	609	638	753	534.6
Average Hours per Volunteer	62	68	57	57	56
Value of One Work Hour (\$)	11.15	11.27	12.55	14.30	14.83**
Value of One Work Year (\$)	20,077	18,413	22,615	25,735	26,694

* The 1999 volunteer program was accomplished at a cost of \$3,213,362, a return of about \$4.40 to every \$1.00 expended.

** The value of volunteer contributions was calculated at the rate of \$14.83 per hour, a figure calculated by the Independent Sector (<http://www.indepsec.org>), a national leadership forum committed to volunteerism and citizen action. The amount was based on the latest data available on the average hourly wage for nonagricultural workers as published in the Economic Report of the President (2000 Edition).

Note: In FY 99, BLM initiated a new methodology for field offices to report volunteer activity. Therefore, to make reliable comparisons, readers should not compare this year's data with data from prior years, but only with data collected from this time forward.

National Totals

Program	Volunteer Hours	Hosted Worker Hours	Total Hours	Percentage of Program
Recreation	313,089	79,365	392,454	41%
Biological Resources	86,645	37,390	124,035	13%
Wild Horse and Burro	13,672	66,342	80,014	8%
Cadastral Survey	3,170	0	3,170	0%
Wilderness	13,531	0	13,531	1%
Riparian/Watershed	34,726	8,212	42,938	4%
Cultural/Historical	96,657	18,135	114,792	12%
Minerals	9,801	5,099	14,900	2%
Support Services	54,119	30,222	84,341	9%
Environmental	61,925	5,014	66,939	7%
Education/Interpretation				
Other	21,295	3,884	25,179	3%
Total	708,630	253,663	962,293	100%

The term "volunteers" as used in the text of this report includes "hosted workers." Volunteers work for BLM without being paid. They donate their time and, in some cases, equipment and money to assist BLM with a variety of jobs. Hosted workers, on the other hand, are paid by another organization, but work for BLM at no charge. Hosted workers made up about 27 percent of the total volunteer time in 1999. Their contributions are included in the State and National Totals tables.